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SUBJECT: ARNOLD PIGGOTT, NEW TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO FOREIGN MINISTER

REF: POS 00135

11. On September 29, the GOTT announced that present T&T High Commissioner to Canada Arnold Piggott has been appointed Foreign Minister, replacing Knowlson Gift who resigned his position on September 25. Arnold Piggott was immediately sworn in.

12. Since an official Ministry of Foreign Affairs bio on Arnold Piggott is not yet available, the following is biographical information on Piggott, supplied to us by a parliamentary source. "His Excellency Arnold A. Piggott, having arrived in Canada on February 28, 2003 assumed office as the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago's 12th High Commissioner to Canada on March 14, 2003 upon presentation of his credentials to Her Excellency Adrienne Clarkson, the Governor-General of Canada. High Commissioner Piggott is a graduate of St. Francis College, Brooklyn, New York where he obtained a first degree in Business Management - the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA). Immediately Prior to his appointment as High Commissioner, Mr. Piggott served as a Senator in the Upper House of the Parliament of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago from December 2001 to October 2002 when he was appointed to the Cabinet of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, as the Minister of Works and Transport. Mr. Piggott was also appointed to serve on several Cabinet Sub-Committees following his Ministerial appointment. During his tenure as a Minister, he formulated and initiated several policies pertinent to the effective administration of the Ministry, as well as provided policy directives for several Boards of Directors of the State. He also successfully facilitated conclusion of bilateral agreements and the execution of a number of infrastructural projects within budget and on time. Previously he was a Consultant in private practice providing Consultancy/Project Management services in Electronic Banking, having been a banker with twenty-five (25) years combined experience within the Financial Services sector. Mr. Piggott has brought to market three (3) International Credit Cards, conceptualized the design/ambience of 33 ATM lobbies including Off-Site locations, redesigned/re-branded and delivered to market replacement ATM cards in keeping with the Corporate Image of a major local Bank. He credits his achievements to his passion for timeliness, a commitment to detail and persistence for high-level performance by team members. He is a visionary and conceptual in problem resolution with strong communication and analytical skills. He also maintains an extensive business network and enjoys public relations activities. As High Commissioner to Canada, Mr. Piggott's mandate is to increase trade, investment, tourism and employment opportunities for Trinidad and Tobago's businesses and citizens in keeping with Government's Vision 2020 development plan. High Commissioner Piggott is married to Wendy Kitson-Piggott, a Canadian trained Microbiologist, and is father of two boys and one girl."

13. COMMENT: Although, prior to his appointment as High Commissioner to Canada, Arnold Piggott had no experience in foreign affairs, the initial thinking among post's local staff is that he is very personable and approachable. We expect that he will follow

closely to PM Manning's recent foreign policy line, which is to pursue close relations with the U.S. while pressuring us for greater assistance in counter-narcotics and security areas. Caricom relations are also expected to be highlighted during this election year. END COMMENT.

AUSTIN